Letter from W. R. McCurdy to Alexander Graham Bell, January 5, 1906

Kite Takes Man 30 Feet in Air Halifax Herald, Dec 30 th .

Professor Alexander Graham Bell thinks he is a step nearer the attainment of his ambition to perfect a flying machine based on the tetrahedral kite principle. He has been experimenting in this direction for several years on his estate of Beinn Bhreagh, Cape Breton. On Wednesday he succeeded in getting his latest designed kite, which he has named the “Frost King,” to lift a man named Neil McDearmid, weighing 165 pounds, to a height of thirty feet and supporting him there as steadily as if glued to the sky. This kite, which he named in honor of Walter Archer Frost, of Keenah, Wisconsin, was first flown on the day of that young man's marriage, last week, to Miss Susan Winifred McCurdy, Mr. Bell's private secretary, and on that occasion it held a man on the rope, but only five feet from the ground, and at the end of the flying line. But in Wednesday's ascent the man was carried aloft thirty feet, with the kite, and kept there in perfect steadiness till it was gradually brought down again to the earth. The kite, which is constructed of 1300 tetrahedral cells, having a total area of 752 square feet of silk, making a supporting surface of 440 square feet, carried aloft not only its own weight of sixty-one pounds, but also a load comprising flying lines, dangling ropes and a rope ladder, making 62 pounds more, together with McDearmid, a man of 168 pounds, a total altogether of 288 pounds. McDearmid clung to the flying line, close to the kite, as he was lifted gracefully into the air. There he remained for several minutes. The kite had been completed some time before the wedding, and since then Professor Bell had been impatiently waiting for a supporting breeze to make his final experiment of the season before leaving for Washington. He had almost given up in despair, and was preparing to leave on Wednesday's noon train, when that morning the desired breeze was blowing and Professor Bell immediately got his men together. Soon the “Frost King” arose gracefully in the air with McDearmid and remained

suspended until satisfactory photographs were taken of the kite, which was for the entire time under perfect control. Its descent was as graceful as its ascent—slow and steady —and it alighted gently upon the ground without perceptible damage to any of its fragile cells. While not the largest tetrahedral kite to be successfully launched at Beinn Bhreagh, it is the largest that has supported itself at such altitude and carried such weight. Professor Bell immediately afterwards left for Washington, greatly pleased with the result of the experiment, and convinced that he had passed another mile-stone on the road towards complete success in his attempt to solve the problem of aerial navigation with bodies specifically heavier than the air.

BELL KITE FLIES WITH HEAVY MAN Flying Machine Built on Tetrahedral Principle Makes Successful Flight with 288 Pounds. UNDER PERFECT CONTROL Inventor Confident That He Is Now on High Road to Solution of Problem of Aerial Navigation.

[SPECIAL DESPATCH TO THE N.Y. HERALD.]

Halifax, ! N. S., Friday.—Professor Alexander Graham Bell thinks he is a step nearer the attainment of his ambition to perfect a flying machine based on the tetrahedral kite principle. He has been experimenting in this direction for several years on his estate of Beinn Bhreagh, Cape Breton. On Wednesday he succeeded in getting his latest designed kite, which he has named the Frost King, to lift a man named Neill McDearmid, weighing 165 pounds, to a height of thirty feet and support him there as steadily as if glued to the sky.

This kite, which is named in honor of Walter Archer Frost, of Keenan, Wis., was first flown on the day of that young man's marriage last week to Miss Susan Winifred McCurdy, Mr. Bell's private secretary, and on that occasion it held a man on the rope, but only five feet from the ground and at the end of a flying line.

The kite, which is constructed of 1,300 tetrahedral cells, having a total area of 752 square feet of silk, making a supporting surface of 440 square feet, carried aloft not only its own

weight of 61 pounds, but also a load comprising flying lines, dangling ropes and a rope ladder making 62 pounds more, together with McDearmid, making a total altogether of 288 pounds.

McDearmid clung to the flying line close to the kite as he was lifted gracefully into the air. There he remained for several minutes until satisfactory photographs were taken of the kite, which was for the entire time under perfect control.

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